United Nations S/2000/400

Security Council

Distr.: General
9 May 2000

Original: English

Letter dated 9 May 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Burkina Faso to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to forward herewith the declaration of the Government of Burkina Faso on the situation in Sierra Leone.

I should be very grateful if this declaration could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Michel **Kafando**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

00-42333 (E) 090500 090500

Annex to the letter dated 9 May 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Burkina Faso to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

[Original: French]

Declaration of the Government of Burkina Faso on the situation in Sierra Leone

The Government of Burkina Faso expresses its indignation and concern at the recent developments in the situation in Sierra Leone, particularly the attacks on United Nations peacekeeping forces which have resulted in the tragic death of several UNOMSIL peacekeepers and the abduction of many more.

It condemns those acts, which are likely to undermine the implementation of the Lomé Peace Agreements of 7 July 1999.

It appeals to the Revolutionary United Front to put an immediate end to such violations and to conform scrupulously to the spirit and the letter of the provisions of those Agreements.

Ouagadougou, 5 May 2000

United Nations S/2000/401

Security Council

Distr.: General
9 May 2000

Original: English

Letter dated 9 May 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Upon instructions of my Government, I have the honour to transmit the attached broadcast to the nation by President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah on the latest developments in Sierra Leone, dated 8 May 2000 (see annex).

I should be grateful if the said document could be issued as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Ibrahim M. **Kamara**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

00-42418 (E) 090500

Annex to the letter dated 9 May 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Broadcast to the nation by H.E. President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah on latest developments in Sierra Leone

Monday, 8 May 2000

Fellow Citizens:

In my last address to you on Sunday, 7 May, I spoke to you about the security situation in the country and the unfortunate incident of misinformation which had created panic in the country. Since then, there have been further developments that have compelled me to address you today.

As you are all aware, Parliamentarians and civil society groups organized a demonstration today to appeal to the RUF to give peace a chance in Sierra Leone. During the demonstration, large crowds marched to the residence of Corporal Foday Sankoh. Unfortunately, what was planned as a march for peace and democracy ended up in a tragic loss of life and injury to some civilians. Government deplores the killing of innocent and unarmed civilians by RUF rebels stationed at Corporal Sankoh's residence. On behalf of the Government and people of Sierra Leone I wish to extend sincere condolences to the families of all those who lost their lives, and others who were injured today. I would like to take this opportunity also to thank the security personnel who eventually brought the situation under control.

As I speak to you, the exact whereabouts of Corporal Foday Sankoh have not yet been determined. A thorough investigation is, however, now being undertaken to determine where he is.

In the light of the purpose of the demonstration today, which was a march for peace and democracy, I appeal to you all to ensure that the lives lost today have not been lost in vain, rather, that they enhance peace and democracy in Sierra Leone. Let us use the deaths as a motivating factor for the observance of the rule of law of our country. I appeal particularly to those engaged in acts of vandalism, looting or commandeering of vehicles to desist from these acts. The law enforcement agents have been instructed to deal swiftly with any violators of our laws. In this regard, I therefore order all men and women officially bearing arms to report immediately to their official designated locations, and to strictly obey the instructions of their commanders.

I wish to assure you all that Government is watching the security situation in the country very closely, and will continue to work in your interest until peace is finally achieved. We are currently working with UNAMSIL to ensure that the security situation continues to improve. We will keep you informed of developments. Meanwhile, please remember what I said to you in my last broadcast about not listening to or spreading rumours. Listen to government statements that will be issued from time to time.

Be assured that your Government is working for you and will do all that is necessary to ensure your safety and security.

I thank you for your attention.

United Nations S/2000/402

Security Council

Distr.: General
9 May 2000
English
Original: French

Letter dated 8 May 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Portugal to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to bring to your attention the statement on the bombings of civilian targets by the Sudanese air force issued on 5 May 2000 by the Presidency of the European Union on behalf of the European Union (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex distributed as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) António **Monteiro**
Permanent Representative of Portugal to the United Nations

00-42482 (E) 100500 100500

Annex to the letter dated 8 May 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Portugal to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English and French]

Statement on the bombings of civilian targets by the Sudanese air force issued on 5 May 2000 by the Presidency of the European Union on behalf of the European Union

The European Union welcomes the recent announcement by the Sudanese President that he has ordered the cessation of aerial bombing of targets in south Sudan. The European Union calls on the Government of the Sudan to fulfil that commitment in full and to refrain from any such actions in the future. The European Union will continue to watch closely the fate of civilian populations in that area.

While reiterating its commitment to the renewed political dialogue, the European Union has called the attention of the authorities of the Sudan to the fact that respect for international humanitarian law is an essential sign of their willingness to create an atmosphere conducive to the successful continuation of that dialogue and their commitment to peace.

The European Union also calls upon the SPLM/A to comply with its responsibility fully to respect the rules and principles of international humanitarian law and to refrain from using civilian premises for military purposes.

The European Union appeals to both parties to decide on a comprehensive cessation of hostilities and to make substantial progress in the ongoing Intergovernmental Authority on Development peace process.

The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union, the associated countries Cyprus and Malta and the European Free Trade Association countries members of the European Economic Area align themselves with this statement.

United Nations S/2000/403

Security Council

Distr.: General
9 May 2000
English
Original: French

Letter dated 8 May 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Portugal to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to bring to your attention the statement concerning UNMIK travel documents issued on 3 May 2000 by the Presidency of the European Union on behalf of the European Union (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex distributed as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) António **Monteiro**
Permanent Representative of Portugal to the United Nations

00-42424 (E) 090500 090500

Annex to the letter dated 8 May 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Portugal to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English and French]

Statement concerning UNMIK travel documents issued on 3 May 2000 by the Presidency of the European Union on behalf of the European Union

The European Union welcomes UNMIK regulation 2000/18 of 29 March governing the issuance of travel documents.

It encourages the member States and the neighbouring States of Kosovo to recognize the travel document soon to be introduced by UNMIK for residents of Kosovo who are granted the status of habitual resident of Kosovo in the course of the upcoming civil registration of population as legal title to free movement, subject to visa regulations at the discretion of every State concerned.

United Nations S/2000/404

Security Council

Distr.: General
9 May 2000
English
Original: French

Letter dated 8 May 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Portugal to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to bring to your attention the statement on Sierra Leone issued on 5 May 2000 by the Presidency of the European Union on behalf of the European Union (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex distributed as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) António **Monteiro**
Permanent Representative of Portugal to the United Nations

00-42430 (E) 090500 090500

Annex to the letter dated 8 May 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Portugal to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English and French]

Statement on Sierra Leone issued on 5 May 2000 by the Presidency of the European Union on behalf of the European Union

The European Union strongly condemns the actions taken by the Revolutionary United Front in Sierra Leone in direct violation of the Lomé Peace Agreement and is deeply disturbed by reports of the killing of UNAMSIL personnel.

Moreover, the European Union finds the detention of UNAMSIL civilian and military personnel and the attacks on UNAMSIL by the Revolutionary United Front totally unacceptable.

The European Union calls on the Revolutionary United Front, in particular its leader, Foday Sankoh, to cease all attacks against UNAMSIL, to release all detainees safely and unconditionally, and to implement fully their commitments under the Lomé Peace Agreement, including the implementation of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme.

The European Union reiterates its strong support for the Lomé Peace Agreement and for the efforts of the United Nations to fulfil its mandate in Sierra Leone.

The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union, the associated countries Cyprus, Malta and Turkey, and the European Free Trade Association countries members of the European Economic Area align themselves with this statement.

United Nations S/2000/405

Security Council

Distr.: General
9 May 2000
English
Original: Arabic

Identical letters dated 8 May 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and to the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a letter dated 6 May 2000 from Mr. Mohammed Said Al-Sahaf, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Iraq. The Minister calls attention to an assault on an Iraqi fishing boat in Iraq's territorial waters that was committed by a Kuwaiti naval patrol, and he affirms Iraq's undisputed right to take whatever measures are necessary to defend its territorial integrity and to seek compensation for such acts of aggression.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council

(*Signed*) Saeed H. **Hasan**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

00-42501 (E) 100500 100500

Annex to the identical letters dated 8 May 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and to the President of the Security Council

I wish to inform you that at 1800 hours on 29 April 2000 the craft *Ibrahim* (No. 185), which was being operated by Mr. Kazim Dahish Kattafah inside Iraqi territorial waters in the Khawr Abd Allah area within the boundaries of Basrah Governorate, was attacked by a Kuwaiti patrol consisting of two gunboats with nine military personnel armed with GC assault rifles on board. They opened fire, boarded the craft, assaulted the crewmen and confiscated the crewmen's fishing permits and the craft's papers. In the incident, Mr. Kazim Dahish and the crewman Fakhir Shabib Husayn received miscellaneous injuries and had to be taken to the Faw hospital for medical attention.

The action of the Kuwaiti authorities in entering our territorial waters to assault Iraqi fishermen there is a manifest breach of Iraq's sovereignty and an act of armed aggression that, by the most elementary standards governing relations between States, constitutes a flagrant violation of the Charter of the United Nations and of all the principles of international law and prevailing international conventions that reject the threat or use of force against the integrity and independence of any country. We protest against the hostile conduct of the Kuwaiti authorities, and we urge you to intervene in order to prevent these violations, namely entry into Iraq's territorial waters and the perpetration of such acts of provocation. The Government of the Republic of Iraq reserves in full the inalienable right accorded to it by the Charter of the United Nations and international conventions to take whatever measures are necessary to defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity and, in accordance with the principle of international responsibility, to seek compensation for the material and other damage done to it by these acts of aggression.

(*Signed*) Mohammed Said **Al-Sahaf**
Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Iraq

United Nations S/2000/406

Security Council

Distr.: General
9 May 2000
English
Original: French

Letter dated 9 May 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Burundi to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the communication from the Government of Burundi concerning the functioning of political parties, so-called political prisoners, assembly sites and freedom of the press (see annex).

I should be grateful if the communication could be treated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Marc **Nteturuye**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

00-42507 (E) 110500 110500

Annex to the letter dated 9 May 2000 from the Permanent Representative of Burundi to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Republic of Burundi presents its compliments to the diplomatic and consular missions and international organizations accredited to Burundi and has the honour to transmit to them herewith the communication of the Government of Burundi on the concerns expressed with regard to the functioning of political parties, so-called political prisoners, assembly sites and freedom of the press.

Bujumbura, 5 May 2000

Appendix

Communication on the concerns expressed with regard to the functioning of political parties, so-called political prisoners, assembly sites and freedom of the press

1. For some time now, certain political partners have been voicing concerns about the present functioning of political parties and the press, the problem of the sites for the protection of the population, and certain detainees who are regarded as political prisoners. It is therefore necessary to respond to these concerns impartially so that they can be approached on an objectively defensible and verifiable basis.

The Government of the Republic of Burundi therefore wishes to bring the following to the attention of national and international opinion:

I. Political parties

2. Burundi has established the principle of political pluralism. Currently, there are 14 registered political parties which participate actively in the political life of the country. They are governed by the Transitional Constitution and the law on political parties. As far as their internal functioning is concerned, each party is governed by its own statute and rules of procedure.

3. Some people have raised the issue of the ban on public demonstrations. For major security reasons, which are known to all, this ban applies not only to political parties but also to any other organization whose goal is not peace and reconciliation. The Transitional Constitution foresaw the danger of such demonstrations and provided for their inhibition in light of the need to restore peace and national cohesion (art. 60).

It should be noted that the Transitional Constitution received the support of all political and social forces, including the political parties, due to the fact that the National Assembly, which is governed by this Act, has been expanded to include all these forces.

4. Others have raised the issue of the harassment and imprisonment of political leaders. The relevant law states that political parties may freely carry out their activities in accordance with the law. However, members of political parties are subject, as are other citizens of Burundi, to existing laws and regulations. Today, no political leader is bothered because of his political affiliation.

5. Still others have spoken of Government interference in the internal management of political parties. It should be clear to national and international public opinion that the internal administration of political parties is the sole responsibility of the management organs of those same parties. The Government's role is simply to make sure that these parties comply with the laws and regulations to which they subscribed at the time they were set up. There is, therefore, no justification for certain members of political parties to blame the Government for their internal dissension.

6. Concerning access of political parties to the State media, there have been some complaints, now and again, about their access to national radio and television. Yet the leaders of these parties speak regularly and freely on radio and television. Even the opinions — in all their diversity — expressed by participants in the Arusha negotiations are regularly broadcast live on radio and television.

7. Rather than harassing political parties, the Government attaches great importance to their smooth functioning, particularly since they are called on to play a key role in the ongoing peace process and in the implementation of the peace agreements so long awaited by the Burundian people.

II. Political prisoners

8. According to legal doctrine and judicial precedents anyone who is deprived of his freedom for political reasons is a political prisoner. When tackling this subject, some politicians consider certain categories of ordinary prisoners as equivalent to political prisoners. These categories are as follows:

1. Persons arrested and prosecuted for the assassination of the late Mr. Melchior Ndadaye, Head of State, and his close collaborators;

2. Persons arrested and prosecuted for massacres committed since 1993 and referred to the criminal chambers;

3. Detained persons prosecuted in the joint chambers of the Supreme Court on charges of attempted assassination and plotting against the Head of State;

4. Prisoners who have been sentenced for having armed themselves against the State authority in the provinces of Cibitoke and in the Bujumbura municipal area;

5. Persons arrested for having participated in armed gangs or terrorist attacks.

9. These prisoners are all ordinary prisoners. Since 1993, the prison population has been increasing, rising from around 4,500 prior to 1993 to 10,200 at the start of 1999, as a result of the crisis which shook our country. It goes without saying that the Burundian judicial system was not prepared for such an increase.

10. Some partners tend to favour their unconditional release. The Government, for its part, considers that any such decision to interrupt the normal course of justice would be contrary to the law and would have nothing but disastrous consequences for the country.

As has already been pointed out, the Government acknowledges that it has not been doing very well expediting the mass of cases in recent years.

11. Accordingly, since 1999 the Government of Burundi has taken the following specific measures to reduce overcrowding in the prisons:

1. Arrangements have been made for judges to travel from Bujumbura to help those provinces which are overwhelmed with work: Ngozi, Gitega, Bururi and Rumonge;

2. Prison inspections have been stepped up so that persons who are not being held on serious charges may be released;

3. Conditional release is regularly granted to prisoners facing lesser charges;

4. The sessions of criminal chambers, which generally last one month, are being extended to two or three months so that defendants may be tried expeditiously.

These measures respond to a specific and urgent concern. They are designed to support the regular detention monitoring mechanisms that were strengthened through the enactment of a new Code of Penal Procedure.

The combination of all these measures and special mechanisms shows that remarkable progress is being made in this area. Thus, the prison population is now 8,700.

Moreover, the Government will be amenable to any approach that may be negotiated in the framework of a comprehensive settlement of the crisis as an outcome of the peace and national reconciliation process currently under way.

III. The situation of protected sites in rural Bujumbura province

12. The protected sites are a result not of a deliberate policy of concentrating the population but rather of a situation of insecurity. This measure was adopted to protect the population from acts of violence on the part of the armed bands and also to prevent people from being caught in the crossfire during clashes between the armed forces and the rebels. Any interpretation which contradicts this motive smacks of bad faith.

Moreover, a distinction should be made between the protected sites dating from 1993, in which the population has preferred to remain up to now, and the sites established since September 1999 following the renewed outbreak of insecurity in rural Bujumbura and the capital. It is the latter sites that are now the focus of attention in terms of the return to the hillsides of origin.

13. With regard to security, the Government re-evaluated the situation in January 2000 and found that it was once again relatively satisfactory. Accordingly, the dismantlement of the sites has been under way since February 2000. It is being carried out in consultation with the population itself and the pace will increase as the security situation becomes more reliable.

14. Management of the dismantlement of the sites is therefore influenced largely by the relative size of the population, the proximity of the site to the capital, the distance between the site and the property, the degree of security in the hillsides of origin and the choice of the population itself as to whether or not to return to the hillsides.

Dismantlement has been scheduled to take place in successive phases. At present nearly 100,000 persons have returned to their hillsides. It is to be hoped that this operation will be completed within two

months if security conditions so permit. The prospective direct talks between the rebels and the armed forces are encouraging in that respect.

IV. The functioning of the press in Burundi

15. There are public and private electronic and print media in Burundi. Burundians can express their views through the national radio and television networks and through some foreign media, such as the British Broadcasting Corporation, Radio France Internationale and the Voice of America, without fear. There is also a public press. It functions and is regulated in accordance with law.

16. Since July 1997 a Maison de la Presse has been operating to defend freedom of the press, and Burundian journalists have joined together in the Association burundaise des journalistes to promote their profession and better defend their interests. Here as elsewhere, the Government of Burundi attaches vital importance to the role of the media in re-establishing peace and national harmony.

17. The crisis in which Burundi is immersed has led to perverse attitudes on the part of some Burundian politicians, to the point of finding scapegoats for the internal deficiencies of their parties. The supposed restraints on the functioning of political parties or the media are false issues. Likewise, the question of so-called political prisoners is perceived subjectively. As to the protected sites, they are being dismantled gradually.

18. Rather than have the questions under consideration be frequently exploited for political purposes, it is the sincere wish of the Government of the Republic of Burundi that the discussion could take into account the genuinely verifiable evidence and remain open to all constructive suggestions.

United Nations S/2000/407

Security Council

Distr.: General
10 May 2000

Original: English

Letter dated 10 May 2000 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Yugoslavia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I am writing to inform you of the dramatic health condition of the arbitrarily detained Serbs on hunger strike in a prison in Kosovska Mitrovica. In my previous correspondence (S/2000/325 and S/2000/352), I advised you of the problem and of the deterioration of their condition.

At the last medical examination, it was found out that their condition was rapidly deteriorating and that 11 of them were in a critical condition. It was suggested that they be taken to hospital and be given immediate medical attention. So far only Arsenije Vitosevic and Vlastimir Aleksic have been hospitalized.

The doctors that examined them called on the judicial and police organs of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) to end the detention of the strikers immediately so that they could be treated properly. However, UNMIK continues to turn a deaf ear to these requests, as well as to the requests of the detained Serbs to be tried fairly and without delay. The refusal of the Kosovo Force (KFOR) and UNMIK to accede to these requests not only constitutes a grave violation of human rights, but may lead to tragic consequences and even to the loss of life of the detainees.

I call on you to use your influence in order to put an end to the suffering of the detained Serbs and to forestall the most tragic consequences.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Vladislav **Jovanovic**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

00-42611 (E) 100500

United Nations S/2000/408

Security Council

Distr.: General
11 May 2000

Original: English

Letter dated 10 May 2000 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i., of the Permanent Mission of Eritrea to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

In my capacity as Chairman of the Group of African States for the month of May 2000, I have the honour to request an open emergency meeting of the Security Council to address the grave situation in Sierra Leone, on behalf of the 53 African States Members of the United Nations, as soon as possible.

(*Signed*) Tesfa Alem **Seyoum**
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

00-42688 (E) 110500

United Nations S/2000/409

Security Council

Distr.: General
11 May 2000
English
Original: French

Letter dated 11 May 2000 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Mali to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to draw your attention to the following:

On 10 May 2000, at its plenary meeting on the situation in Sierra Leone, the Group of African States expressed the hope that the Security Council would hold a public briefing on the issue.

In that connection, I should like to ask you to call, as a matter of urgency, a public briefing during which representatives of the Group of African States could be authorized to intervene in the discussion.

(*Signed*) Cheickna **Keita**
First Counsellor, Chargé d'affaires a.i.
(for the Ambassador, Permanent Representative)

00-42694 (E) 110500